

**OWOSSO CABLE ACCESS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**FEBRUARY 8, 2010**

**5:00 P.M.**

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** CHAIRPERSON JAMES GUTTING

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** CHAIRPERSON JAMES GUTTING

**PRESENT:** Commissioners W. Shaffer Fox, Christopher Hardwick, Jack Johnson, and Eddie Urban, Vice Chairperson Michael Tillotson and Chairperson James Gutting.

**ABSENT:** None.

**SET TIME LIMIT AND RE-AFFIRM RULES OF CONDUCT**

Motion by Vice Chairperson Tillotson to set a time limit of 60 minutes and re-affirm the Rules of Conduct.

Motion supported by Commissioner Urban and concurred in by unanimous vote.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Commissioner Hardwick to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of a sound discussion to the OCTS Update item.

Motion supported by Commissioner Urban and concurred in by unanimous vote.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 11, 2010**

Motion by Commissioner Fox to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 11, 2010 as presented noting the change of any references to City Manager to Commissioner.

Motion supported by Commissioner Hardwick and concurred in by unanimous vote.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Vicki Bryant, 2450 Krouse Road, Channel 95 contributor, thanked the Commission members for their service. She went on to say that she was concerned about comments that there is too much religious programming on Channel 95. She feels that religious programming is essential to the community and doesn't want to see Christian programming removed. She asked how the Commission proposes filling air time if most of the programs submitted for playback are of a religious nature.

**OCTS UPDATE**

Commissioner Johnson indicated that he has been concerned for some time about their funding situation as donations from local churches have significantly decreased and he is now being asked to perform broadcasting services for the general public on occasion. He distributed a letter from the OCTS Board requesting a contract with the City for broadcast services. He indicated he wanted to discuss funding options. Chairperson Gutting indicated the meeting had time constraints and any such discussion should be taken up at the March meeting. There was discussion how long the conversation would take.

Motion by Commissioner Fox to allow Commissioner Johnson to address the funding issue for two minutes.

Motion supported by Commissioner Urban and concurred in by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Johnson informed the Commission that as of March 1, 2010 OCTS would no longer provide broadcast services without a contract. He said the current arrangement puts the entire financial responsibility on OCTS and he wanted the City to negotiate a contract for services.

Chairperson Gutting indicated the two minute time period was up.

Commissioner Hardwick indicated there was an issue over the weekend with Vice Chairperson Tillotson's DVD's not having any sound. He said he verified there was no sound track recorded on the DVD's and gave them back to Vice Chairperson Tillotson.

There was great contention throughout the conversation and Commissioners Hardwick and Johnson left the meeting at 5:16 p.m.

## **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

### **PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE**

Chairperson Gutting noted that if OCTS will cease to broadcast the City will need to expedite the purchase of broadcast equipment.

City Liaison Amy K. Kohagen noted she hoped the conversation would come up during the special Council meeting to discuss priorities.

Chairperson Gutting went on to say that the Commission could not authorize payment to OCTS for its services and that he hoped the City would be able to provide the statutorily required 8 hours per day of programming until new equipment could be purchased. He went on to say that under the circumstances there may not be anymore that could be accomplished on this subject.

Commissioner Fox indicated he felt a special meeting would be in order so that the Commission could discuss how to best make the transition to full time broadcast responsibilities.

There was also question as to whether the two Commissioners that left would be shown as absent and how many times a Commissioner could be absent.

Motion by Commissioner Fox to hold a special meeting on February 22, 2010 at 5:00 pm to discuss assuming broadcast responsibilities.

Motion supported by Vice Chairperson Tillotson and concurred in by unanimous vote.

### **COPYRIGHT RULES**

Chairperson Gutting led the discussion noting the copyright policies of other communities. He noted that while leaving responsibility to the sponsor should work for the most part he was concerned that the other two broadcast entities (should they continue to broadcast) may not hold to the standards required by the City. He said he felt it would be much easier to police this issue if the City took over full time broadcast responsibilities.

Commissioner Fox suggested the formation of an LLC may relieve the City of the liability presented by copyright infringement issues. Chairperson Gutting noted that the City may not be allowed to form such a corporation.

City Liaison Kohagen noted that other communities have reported having very few issues with copyright infringement.

It was noted that should OCTS cease to broadcast the issue will have essentially resolved itself and making changes at this point may be premature. The item was postponed until the March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting to allow the current situation to play itself out.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Chairperson Gutting addressed Mrs. Bryant's earlier comments saying the Commission seeks to provide programming that has a broad base of appeal. He also said that new programming may be slow to come in because people do not realize they can submit programs for playback. He went on to say that he does not believe there will be less religious based programming in the future but that the goal was to see a more integrated schedule.

Vickie Bryant, indicated she thought the City was making a mistake in taking over the channel and she felt Commissioners Hardwick and Johnson were made to look like fools. She also commented that she had heard she gets too much playback time on Wednesdays, but she no longer submits any programming for broadcast on Wednesdays. Lastly she noted the inappropriate comment by a Commission member referring to her as her husband's girlfriend.

Chairperson Gutting indicated he felt that the City had the resources to provide the necessary funding to move the channel forward, whereas funding for private organizations has become scarce lately. He went on to say that volunteers will be needed to assist in operations so that City staff will not be overburdened.

Chairperson Gutting also offered to test Vice Chairperson Tillotson's DVDs for sound.

Commissioner Urban indicated he did not like the 4 minute gap between programs on OCTS.

Rebecca Tillotson commented that things had gone so well during the January meeting she did not know what happened for this meeting to deteriorate so badly.

Chairperson Gutting noted the recent letter to the editor from former KoK leader Jim Hardwick, saying it was not the Commission's intent to destroy what he had helped to build but to grow the station and serve everyone.

Commissioner Fox echoed Chairperson Gutting's comments saying he has heard the history of the channel and there were a lot of people to thank for their work in providing programming, but now is the time to move the station forward and use it to promote Owosso.

Commissioner Urban noted that he had heard the SRI may leave Owosso because Owosso isn't well known.

Vice Chairperson Tillotson expressed his concern that a political program ran during the last election and there was no corresponding viewpoint presented.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Vice Chairperson Tillotson to adjourn at 6:11 p.m.

Motion supported by Commissioner Fox and concurred in by unanimous vote.

---

Amy K. Kohagen, City Clerk